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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8242

INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1145

RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 3312

RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI 1240

RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 2796

RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA

UNCLAS DAR ES SALAAM 000074

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

AF/E FOR JLIDDLE, INR/AA FOR FEHRENREICH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL KDEM TZ

SUBJECT: TANZANIA BY-ELECTION: AN EASY WIN FOR RULING CCM

REF: A: Dar es Salaam 31; B: 2008 Dar es Salaam 722

**¶1.** (U) Ruling CCM party candidate Rev. Luckson Mwanjale cruised to victory in the January 25 by-election in Mbeya Rural district (see ref a). Mwanjale captured 75 percent of the votes, slightly down from the near 80 percent won by the prior CCM candidate. Very low voter turnout, 34 percent, may have been partly attributable to the absence of the CHADEMA candidate, since CHADEMA declined to throw its support behind the leading opposition candidate, from the Civic United Front (CUF). As in the Tarime by-election (ref b), candidates from smaller parties had negligible impact: the Sauti ya Umma candidate earned fewer than 500 votes out of the 44,000 cast.

**¶2.** (SBU) Accredited diplomatic observers to the election, including from the Embassy's Millennium Challenge Corporation office, met with election officials, police and party leaders, including the CUF candidate and CCM political leader (and former Prime Minister) John Malecela. Before the election, CUF complained of excessive police presence, bias on the part of the Returning Officer, and CCM use of government equipment, including vehicles, in the campaign. Malecela was dismissive of CUF (and seemingly of multipartyism) and implied that CCM would win on the strength of party loyalty rather than the character or opinions of its candidate, who was not made available to observers. The Regional Commissioner, who is responsible for public security, told of rumors that CUF had brought in youth gangs for intimidation; however, there were no reports of violence during the polling.

**¶3.** (U) Observers from the diplomatic community saw a significant need for voter education and better organization on the part of electoral officials. Many voters, particularly women, required considerable assistance in the voting process. While some polling stations were well run, others had a much more chaotic environment, with deficiencies including failure to ink the fingers of voters who had cast their ballots and failure to post openly the registration list. In addition, some polling stations had extra clips for closing ballot boxes, which could have created the opportunity for tampering. In several cases, voters' names appeared twice on registration lists.

**¶4.** (U) After the initial ballot counting at each polling station, the results in favor of CCM were clear. The National Electoral Commission only released the results two days later, however, in part because of CUF objections to the process in some polling stations. Even after the announcement of the results, CUF continued to complain in the media that the election had not been freely and fairly conducted, and threatened to take legal action. By the end of the week, Rev. Mwanjale had been sworn in as Tanzania's newest MP.

**¶5.** (SBU) Comment: Taken together, the Mbeya Rural and Tarime by-elections may give a good indication of the shape of the 2010 election processes in mainland Tanzania. NEC has the capability to

run an election with minor disruptions, but may not devote as many resources to contests where the outcome is clear in advance (especially in CCM's rural strongholds). Where CCM is sure of victory, the real struggle will be within the party to secure the nomination. The tendency of losing candidates and parties to reject results, even where election flaws are minor relative to the margin of victory, is disturbing, though at least on the mainland any unrest will be quickly contained. It will be important for the U.S. to contribute credibly to the election monitoring operation for 2010. End comment.

ANDRE